

**This** brochure is for youth in out-of-home care. It explains your rights!



Foster Care Ombudsman  
744 P Street, MS 9-025  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**The law \* says:** You have rights if you live in foster homes, group homes, shelters, or transitional housing facilities. The law also says social workers, probation officers and people where you live must tell you about your rights.

**This law also says:**

- Your social worker must talk with you about your rights at least once every six months;
- You must be told about your rights, in a way that's easy to understand;
- The people where you live must answer any questions you have about your rights;
- If six or more foster youth live in your foster home, a poster must be placed where you can see it.

Call if you think your rights are not followed – it's a free call and it won't show up on the phone bill!

**1-877-846-1602**

**Write important info here:**  
Foster Care Ombudsman **1-877-846-1602**

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Social Worker (phone) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Probation Officer (phone) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Lawyer (phone) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

\* Welfare and Institutions Code 16001.9

**Who can help me if my rights are not followed?**

**1) Call the Foster Care Ombudsman:** Their job is to help youth with problems or questions. They can also tell you the name of your lawyer, social worker or probation officer.

**Call:**  
**1-877-846-1602**  
*It's a free call!*

**2) Write:**

Foster Care Ombudsman  
744 P Street, M.S. 9-025  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Email:** [fosteryouthhelp@dss.ca.gov](mailto:fosteryouthhelp@dss.ca.gov)

**Or, fill out the "Complaint Page" on our website. It's easy to do!**

[www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov](http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov)

**3) Call your lawyer:**

Every youth has a lawyer (unless a judge says you cannot). You can talk to your lawyer in private. You can tell your lawyer anything you want. Most of the time, your lawyer cannot tell anyone else what you say (except in special situations; ask your lawyer about this.) Your lawyer's job is to defend all your rights. Your lawyer can help you with:

- visits with your brothers, sisters and parents
- questions about court or your case plan
- problems with your social worker



**Call your Social Worker or Probation Officer:**

Their job is to make sure all your needs are taken care of. Remember, you have the right to:

- know their name and phone number
- ask for their help
- have them call you back

**Call CCL:**

CCL (Community Care Licensing) gives the home you live in a license to operate. You can call CCL if your home is not a healthy and safe place. You can call in private. CCL will not tell your home you called. Call the Foster Care Ombudsman to get the CCL phone number.

**Problems with your lawyer or social worker?**

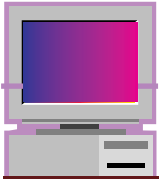
Ask for the name and telephone number of his/her supervisor. Call the supervisor and make a complaint.

If you have questions or problems,  
**CONTACT US:**  
**FOSTER CARE OMBUDSMAN**



**1-877-846-1602**  
*(It's a free call!)*

**e-mail**



[fosteryouthhelp@dss.ca.gov](mailto:fosteryouthhelp@dss.ca.gov)  
[www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov](http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov)

**Remember:**  
**What you tell us is private**  
*(except in certain circumstances).*

The Office of the State Ombudsman wishes to thank the Los Angeles Affiliate of the National Association of Counsel for Children for their pioneering efforts to inform youth of their rights in the juvenile system.

If you feel you are being discriminated against because of your sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic group, ancestry, national origin, gender identity, mental or physical disability or HIV status, or for any other reason, you should call the Foster Care Ombudsman Help-line for assistance.



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
S. Kimberly Belshé, Secretary  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES